



# **East Valley Partnership**

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Wilford Drinkwine, believed his country needed him during World War II.

He moved his young son and his wife, Edna, halfway across America for a job in the Nevada desert, working at the country's largest Navy munitions depot.

I was born a couple of years later.

But, years of breathing poisonous fumes around harsh chemicals, finally took his life.

Wilford Drinkwine was my father. I was 11 years old.

The challenges my mother, my brother, and I were about to face were daunting.

For an 11-year-old, they were terrifying.

But, my mother taught me how to deal with those challenges – she met them head-on. She opened a dress shop and she went to work, 10 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I worked right beside her, every day after school and on weekends.

My mother didn't complain about counting every penny or being a widow with two children.

When life got hard, she worked harder. She never quit.

Let me tell you something: Edna Drinkwine died at the age of 87 – and she was my inspiration -- each and every day.

From her, I learned to make hard choices.

She taught me the value of action -- that if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

She taught me to honor our country.

She taught me that the only thing you're entitled to in life is a chance.

And, she taught me that you're measured by how you meet challenges.

She was right, of course.

I have thought of that every day for the past year, every day since I was challenged with the opportunity to become your Governor.

I say "challenged," because for five high-rolling years before I took office, the system grew government as large as possible.

I faced a state budget deficit of nearly five billion dollars across two fiscal years.

I faced a federal government whose unfunded mandates and sweetheart deals were stealing Arizona's freedom and threatening to bankrupt our state.

Well, I am my mother's daughter.

I am up to this challenge.

I am a problem solver.

When I began as Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, I encountered a local government bogged down so deeply in debt that it had utilized one hundred and sixty five million dollars in short-term borrowing -- just to meet cash flow.

At the end of my tenure in 2002, I left Maricopa County in one of the strongest financial positions of any county in the nation.

The financial turnaround was so good, that *Governing Magazine* proclaimed Maricopa County "one of the two best managed large counties in the nation."

State Government in Arizona spends 85 percent of the resources it receives supporting education, paying for health care and paying for public safety.

Unlike our Federal Government, we do not print money to support these core responsibilities.

Instead, we tax our citizens to support the common good: To create an educated society, to ensure an affordable level of health care and, most importantly, to secure public safety.

These are PRECISELY the same qualities that allow us to RETAIN companies and jobs – while we create an environment that’s friendlier to business – and develop a FOCUSED statewide business attraction and retention strategy.

The Arizona Comeback began in earnest when I fought for – and won -- thanks to the help of courageous members of both parties in the State Senate and the State House – the right of the VOTERS to decide whether to raise the state sales tax by 1 percent over the next three years.

I’ve NEVER voted to raise taxes in my entire career.

Not once in 28 years in public service. Not one time!

But, I’ve learned one thing above all else: Doing the RIGHT thing almost always means doing the HARD thing.

That’s how I feel about Proposition 100. As hard as it is to do, I will be a “YES” vote come Election Day.

I’m voting “YES” because it’s the right thing to do, and I strongly encourage you to vote “YES” as well.

IF we are to preserve the core functions of the Arizona we all love ...

-- IF we want to keep funding Arizona’s K-12 education system at reasonable levels ...

– IF we want to help our universities and community colleges ...

– IF we want to keep felons locked up ...

-- and IF we want to aid Arizona’s poorest families with the help they desperately need ... then Proposition 100 MUST pass!

I emphasize, this is a TEMPORARY tax – it will start on June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, and come to a DEAD STOP at the end of the day on May 31, 2013.

This is not a cure-all, but the tax will get us through until revenues recover, so that education does not bear the brunt of the downturn.

To those who stand in opposition to this tax – those who claim their opposition is based on conservative principles, let me remind you that when Ronald Reagan was elected Governor of California in 1966, he discovered the California budget had been built on a house of cards -- a Ponzi scheme -- designed to let politicians take credit for spending NOW and forcing OTHERS to worry about the consequences LATER.

Vast amounts of debt and accounting gimmicks -- coupled with a huge expansion in permanent spending and government programs -- had left California and its new Governor with a financial crisis -- and a state budget near collapse.

Sound familiar?

No one can challenge the conservative credentials of perhaps one of the greatest presidents of the 20th Century.

This great man, of great faith, was a true conservative.

Yet, he confronted the insurmountable state budget crisis by proposing and ratifying a tax increase.

Ronald Reagan had a good, conservative plan.

And, so do I.

We are focused on getting Arizona back on track -- bolstering our base industries -- advancing our competitive position in the global economy.

Working with the Legislature, we have now permanently reduced state spending by over two billion dollars and to return state government to a size it can afford.

I have launched a Jobs Action Team – Commerce -- State Land -- the Departments of Environmental Quality and Revenue – are all working together to cut through red tape and speed what has been a slow government process.

I am committing ten million dollars of my discretionary funding -- through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 -- to establish a Job Training Assistance Program.

I am focused on a combination of regulatory and tax reforms.

For the longterm, we're re-thinking areas of our tax structure that unduly burden our employers -- particularly those requiring large capital investments, such as manufacturing.

My Commerce Advisory Council is focusing -- laser-like -- on the needs of businesses -- from Science and Technology -- Aerospace and Defense -- to Small Business -- to Renewable Energy -- and helping Arizona become the Solar Capitol of the World.

This is a comprehensive approach -- one that will result in -- focused priorities -- focused investment -- and focused Industry efforts.

Arizona is making great strides in its approach to renewable energy -- especially in solar.

Last summer, I signed legislation creating the renewable energy tax incentive program. Companies are interested -- and they are coming to Arizona.

-- Suntech Power Holdings.

-- Tower Automotive.

-- Stirling Energy Systems.

... Are all part of Arizona's growing solar landscape ... and Bell Independent Power announced it will build a five mega-watt solar plant at the University of Arizona Tech Park -- including a first of its kind thermal storage system.

So, you tell me, are we starting to win?

You bet we are.

We've attracted well over one billion dollars in capital -- and nearly two THOUSAND jobs.

And, we've done much more:

-- "Operation Clean Sweep" has inmates picking up trash along our highways.

-- Our ArizonaSERVES Task Force is coordinating statewide volunteer efforts with faith-based and community organizations assisting those in need in our communities.

-- Every one of our transportation projects is moving forward because we were efficient and diligent with more than five hundred and twenty million dollars in federal stimulus dollars obligated wisely.

-- We've resolved the long-standing issue involving residential encroachment around Luke Air Force Base making it clear to the Defense Department that Arizona stands ready for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter mission.

-- We're taking the fight to Washington on border security – telling the federal government to pay its bills for incarcerating illegal aliens.

– We're transferring back to the Federal Government non-violent criminal aliens housed in the Department of Corrections, saving Arizona taxpayers thousands of dollars.

-- My Commission on Privatization and Efficiency is identifying state services and agencies whose functions can be eliminated, consolidated, streamlined or outsourced to achieve greater operational efficiency in meeting the needs of our citizens.

So, tell me, aren't these steps in the right direction?

But, wait, there's more:

-- We've curbed the Regulatory State – my first official act as governor was to order a moratorium on state regulations.

-- We've protected the Sanctity of Life.

-- We've supported Arizona as a Right-to-Work State.

-- We've done away with Political Correctness – returning Christmas and Hanukah to the Capitol.

-- We've protected Second Amendment Rights -- expanding gun owner rights to carry firearms while respecting private property rights.

-- We've brought traditional values back to our young people, restoring abstinence-only sex education in our schools.

-- And we've supported traditional marriage.

Now, I am not aiming to please everyone.

I am aiming to lead this Arizona Comeback – to win the future for our children and grandchildren.

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Wilford and Edna Drinkwine were common Americans, but they were the whole world to me. They worked hard, asked for nothing in return, and made silent sacrifices for the common good.

I am their proud daughter who understands that the call to public service is higher than any partisan purpose.

I am restoring Arizona – committed to its comeback -- based on our common values, cultivated in the soil of self-sacrifice.

Abraham Lincoln said, (Quote) “The struggle of today is not altogether FOR today; it is for a vast FUTURE also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have placed upon us.” (Unquote)

So, let us proceed in the great task of making Arizona our STRONG AND SHINING HOME.

Thank you. God bless you and your families, and may God bless this great state of Arizona.